

REMARKS

I. Introduction

By the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended and claims 2-8 canceled. Claims 9 and 10 are newly presented for consideration. Accordingly, claims 1, 9, and 10 are now pending in the application.

II. Office Action Summary

In the Office Action of May 26, 2005, claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,654,902 issued to Scheidt et al. ("Scheidt"). Claims 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Scheidt in view of U.S. Patent 5,560,100 issued to Englert. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

III. Rejections Under 35 USC §102

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Scheidt. The cancellation of claims 2, 4, 5, and 8 renders this ground of rejection moot with respect to these claims.

Regarding independent claim 1, the Office Action alleges that Scheidt discloses a method and system for recyclable components that comprises various steps including reading out from a manufactured article information contained in a memory unit regarding instruction of disassembly of a manufactured article and specific properties of the component parts. The component parts are allegedly disassembled and the system determines if any components are qualified for reuse, and sends the qualified components for refurbishing. The Office Action further alleges that Scheidt alters the treatment process of components that include a high content of pure plastics and precious metals by sending such components to dedicated recovery lines.

As amended, independent claim 1 defines a manufactured article treatment processing method that comprises the steps of:

selectively reading out information concerning a manufactured article being subjected to treatment from at least one of a rating label, a memory affixed to the manufactured article, and a database ;
extracting the component parts which contain harmful or hazardous materials to be separated;
determining a treatment procedure to separate component parts of the manufactured article on the basis of the information concerning the manufactured article and facilities of a treatment-entrusted factory;
treating the manufactured article in accordance with the treatment procedure and checking whether relevant work has been completed through a medium of a detecting means ; and
determining that a treatment process for at least one of the component parts cannot be executed and extracting alternative procedure candidates contained in the information concerning the manufactured article and determining an altered treatment procedure for the manufactured article.

According to independent claim 1, information concerning a manufactured article being subjected to treatment is selectively read out. The information can be read from either a rating label, memory affixed to the manufactured article, or a database. The information can also be read from a combination of these sources. Information is extracted regarding the component parts which contain harmful or hazardous materials to be separated. Next, a treatment procedure is determined to separate component parts of the manufactured article. The treatment procedure can be determined, for example, based on information concerning the manufactured article and various facilities of a treatment-entrusted factory. The manufactured article is then treated in accordance with the treatment procedure. Additionally, a check is performed through a medium of a detecting means to determine whether relevant work has been completed. If a treatment process cannot be executed for any of the component parts, then alternative procedure candidates are extracted from information concerning the manufactured article and an altered treatment procedure is determined for the

manufactured article. According to the claimed invention, harmful and/or hazardous substances can be effectively separated.

The Office Action alleges that Scheidt discloses the features recited in independent claim 1. This is not the case. Scheidt discloses a recyclable product wherein each component of the product is provided with a memory which stores various information regarding the component. A sensor can also be provided to detect the condition (i.e., various operational states) of each component and store the results in a memory. When the product is being discarded, this information can be accessed externally in order to search and identify which components are capable of being recycled. According to the invention of Scheidt, the information stored in the memory units can be reviewed in order to check quality and determine whether the associated component has a high residual value. Accordingly, it can be determined whether the component should be discarded or reused. See col. 5, lines 1-11.

Scheidt does not appear to provide any disclosure or suggestion for various features recited in independent claim 1. For example, Scheidt does not determine whether relevant work, from a particular treatment procedure, has been completed. Scheidt also fails to disclose the feature of extracting alternative processing procedures if a treatment process for one of the component parts cannot be performed.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the art of record.

Independent claim 9 defines a manufactured article treatment processing method that comprises the steps of:

selectively reading out information concerning a manufactured article being subjected to treatment from at least one of a rating label, a memory affixed to the manufactured article, and a database;

extracting the component parts, incapable of being treated by facilities installed in a treatment-entrusted factory, to be separated;

determining a treatment procedure to separate component parts of the manufactured article on the basis of the information concerning the manufactured article and the facilities of the treatment-entrusted factory;

treating the manufactured article in accordance with the treatment procedure and checking whether the relevant work has been completed through a medium of a detecting means; and

determining that a treatment process for one of the component parts cannot be executed and extracting alternative procedure candidates using part separation procedure information contained in the information concerned with the manufactured article and determining an altered treatment procedure for the manufactured article.

Independent claim 9 recites certain features which are similar to those recited in independent claim 1. For example, the method defined by independent claim 9 provides a step of treating the manufactured article in accordance with the treatment procedure and checking whether the relevant work has been completed using a medium of a detecting means. The method of independent claim 9 further discloses the feature of extracting alternative processing procedures if a treatment process for one of the component parts cannot be performed. As previously discussed with respect to independent claim 1, these particular features are not shown or suggested by the art of record.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claims 9 is allowable over the art of record.

Independent claim 10 defines a manufactured article treatment processing method that comprises, in part, the steps of:

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treating the manufactured article in accordance with the treatment procedure and checking whether the relevant work has been completed through a medium of a detecting means; and

determining that a treatment process for one of the component parts cannot be executed and extracting alternative procedure candidates using part separation procedure information contained in the information concerned with the manufactured article and determining an altered treatment procedure for the manufactured article.

According to the method of independent claim 10, the manufactured article is treated in accordance with the treatment procedure and a check is performed to determine whether the relevant work has been completed using a medium of a detecting means. Alternative processing procedures are also extracted if a treatment process for one of the component parts cannot be performed. As previously discussed with respect to independent claims 1 and 9, these particular features are not shown or suggested by the art of record.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claim 10 is allowable over the art of record.

IV. Rejections Under 35 USC §103

Claims 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Scheidt in view of Englert.

The cancellation of claims 3 and 6 renders this particular ground of rejection moot.

V. Conclusion

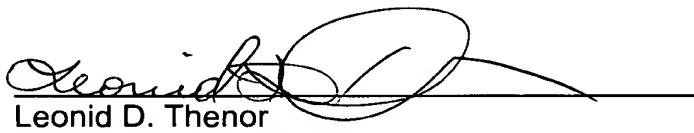
For the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is believed in order, and courteously solicited.

If the Examiner believes that there are any matters which can be resolved by way of either a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

AUTHORIZATION

Applicants request any shortage or excess in fees in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, and for which no other form of payment is offered, be charged or credited to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case: 500.36322CX1).

Respectfully submitted,
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